

BIRD BANDING NOTES

Conducted by Wm. I. Lyon

BIRD BANDING NOTES FROM THE RECENT NATIONAL MEETINGS

The A. O. U. meeting at Pittsburgh. The forty-second annual meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union was held at Pittsburgh, Pa., from November 11-13, 1924, inclusive. The session on Wednesday forenoon was devoted to bird banding. Dr. Joseph Grinnell, of California, presented a paper on "Bird Netting as a Method in Ornithology", illustrated. "Some Results of Bird Banding", illustrated, was the subject of a paper by Wm. I. Lyon, of Illinois. Frederick C. Lincoln, of Washington, D. C., gave a report on "Results of Bird Banding in Europe", illustrated. A paper entitled "A Report of the Tanager Hill Bird Banding Station", prepared by Mrs. Frank W. Commons, of Minnesota, was presented by Dr. Thomas S. Roberts. Laurence B. Fletcher, of Massachusetts, reported on the "Activities of the Northeastern Bird Banding Association", illustrated.

During the week the Eastern Bird Banding Association held a banquet at the Faculty Club, and in spite of a severe rain storm which caused some members to become lost, the occasion proved to be a pleasant one. Rudyerd W. Boulton served as toastmaster. The speakers were, President A. A. Allen, Dr. T. S. Palmer, Frederick C. Lincoln, Hoyes Lloyd, and W. E. Saunders. The meeting closed with the exhibition of a series of lantern slides by Dr. Ralph E. DeLury, of Canada. An impromptu meeting was afterward held in the Zoology Building, where Dr. Fish exhibited two reels of Panama pictures.

The W. O. C. meeting at Nashville. The Inland Bird Banding Association held its annual meeting in conjunction with the Wilson Ornithological Club, at Nashville, Tennessee, on November 28-30, 1924. This was the first general meeting of an ornithological nature to be held south of the Ohio River, and its wonderful success is a great tribute to President A. F. Ganier and the Tennessee Ornithological Society. The memory of this meeting will remain forever with those who were able to attend. More than a dozen states were represented in the registry of attendance. A number of new recruits were added to the host of bird banders during the sessions. There seemed to be a general feeling that one of the results of this meeting would be a stimulation of interest in bird study in the southern states.

No one session was set aside especially for the papers on bird banding, but they were well distributed through all of the sessions. Mr. Frederick C. Lincoln, of Washington, discussed "The Purpose of Bird Banding and Some Results", illustrated. Mr. Herbert L. Stoddard, of Georgia, explained some very unique methods in a paper on "Banding the Shore Birds of Lake Michigan", illustrated. "Bird Banding Experiences in Indiana", was the subject chosen by Samuel L. Perkins III, of Indiana. Prof. James E. Stack, of the Michigan Agricultural College, discussed the matter of "Bird Banding in Colleges." "Various Methods Used in Bird Banding", illustrated, was discussed by William I. Lyon, of Illinois. The Secretary read a paper by Mrs. Frank W. Commons, of Minnesota, on "An Intimate Method of Studying Birds." Mr. A. F. Ganier, of Tennessee, reported on "Bird Banding in the Nashville District", illustrated. Two reels of motion pictures of birds of unusual merit were presented, as follows: "Sea Birds on



Wm. I. Lyon releasing at Nashville a Harris Sparrow trapped and banded in Illinois.

Secretary—Samuel E. Perkins III, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Treasurer—Herbert L. Stoddard, Beachton, Georgia.

Field Secretary—T. E. Musselman, Quincy, Illinois.

Councilors—S. Prentiss Baldwin, Cleveland, Ohio; M. J. Magee, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan; Mrs. H. C. Miller, Racine, Wisconsin; O. M. Schantz, Chicago, Illinois; Prof. J. W. Stack, East Lansing, Michigan; Albert F. Ganier, Nashville, Tennessee; Frank W. Commons, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Dr. H. B. Ward, Urbana, Illinois; Prof. T. C. Stephens, Sioux City, Iowa; R. A. Gilliam, Dallas, Texas.

When the Saturday evening session was over, about nine o'clock, the guests were all quickly transported to the beautiful mansion of Mrs. James C. Bradford, where a delightful reception was given to the visitors. Early on the following morning a fleet of automobiles were waiting to take those who wished to go on the official field trip. Over twenty cars were counted in line at one time, and there must have been more than seventy-five people in the party. Stops were made in the various city parks and along the Tennessee River. It was quite an experience for those who came from the prairie states to get a glimpse of the great standing beech timber in Shelby Park. At noon the entire party assembled at the country home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward A. Lindsey, some twenty miles from Nashville, and known as "Ridgetop". Here a real southern "breakfast" was served with genuine southern hospitality. An afternoon stroll through the woods

Bonaventure Island, Quebec", by Herbert L. Stoddard, of Georgia. "Bird Studies in Motion Pictures", by Dr. Thomas S. Roberts, of Minnesota, presented by Mr. Lyon. One or two other papers on banding were not presented because of lack of time, and it is hoped that these may be printed in the future.

The Inland Bird Banding Association held its annual business meeting on the morning of November 29, Saturday. Everyone present sincerely regretted the absence of the President, Mr. S. Prentiss Baldwin, of Ohio, whose attendance was prevented by sickness. Councillor Samuel E. Perkins III, was made chairman *pro tempore*. Then the minutes were read and adopted, the reports of the Secretary and of the Treasurer were read and adopted. Upon report of the nominating committee, F. C. Lincoln, chairman, the following officers were duly elected for the ensuing year.

President—William I. Lyon, Waukegan, Illinois.

Vice-President—Dr. Leon J. Cole, Washington, D. C.

Vice-President—Percival Brooks Coffin, Chicago, Illinois.

on this mountain top brought us to the hour when we must hurry for the various trains upon which we were to scatter to our respective homes. And thus was brought to a close one of the most enjoyable conventions of bird lovers within our experience.

[The following story by Mrs. Commons is a wonderful tribute to bird banding. Her work has converted a carefully guarded bird sanctuary into one of the most important bird banding stations in the country.—W. I. L.]

REPORT OF THE TANAGER HILL BIRD-BANDING STATION 1923-1924

By Marie A. Commons

It was somewhat under protest that we became banders of birds. Our interest in ornithology had a sentimental rather than a scientific basis and birds had ever been to us symbols of freedom: consequently it was with reluctance that we undertook an enterprise that might seem to add one more hazard to their precarious lives or burden them with fetters that might impede their liberty.

But it was at the A. O. U. Convention in Chicago in 1922, after listening in rapt attention to Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Lyon that we experienced a change of heart, and returned home more keenly alive to the wonderful possibilities of our own few acres of land.

This property, which we call Tanager Hill, is situated seventeen miles from Minneapolis, on Lake Minnetonka in the State of Minnesota. There are thirty-three acres, to be exact, with 700 feet of level shoreline where gulls and terns circle in graceful flight, kingfishers dive from the dock stakes, shore birds pick their way daintily along the sand and blueherons stand motionless as if painted on a screen. From the highway, which skirts the shore, the land dips to a willow-encircled marsh, vocal from spring to fall with redwing blackbirds, and the favorite haunt of bitterns, rails, greenherons and the many marsh-loving sparrows, vireos and warblers. Beyond the marsh is the hay meadow with its song sparrows, bobolinks and meadowlarks, and from there the land rises gradually to the vegetable garden and berry patches, always disputed territory with catbirds, robins, orioles, grosbeaks and pheasants. An abrupt incline brings us to the alfalfa field where the killdeers and vesper sparrows nest, and still climbing we reach the broad lawn and the house on the crest of the hill amid the sugar maples, elms and lindens. The roadway, leading to the rear of the house, leaves the highway at the lake shore and winds up the hill, past orchard and vineyard, bordered with berry-bearing shrubs, dear to the birds at all seasons, but especially to migrants in the fall. Back of the house wild nature prevails—a dozen steps from the door and we are in a native forest with its tangle of second growth and under-brush, mostly wild berry bushes, elder, prickly ash and dogwood. On the right the land drops off precipitously into a fern carpeted ravine, beloved of the thrushes and ovenbirds, and on the left declines in wooded slopes and hollows to the tree pasture, on the eastern boundary of which lies Round Lake. This fair-sized body of water, much in favor with migrating water fowl, is fed by a stream that meanders into it through a marsh of quill reeds and wild rice, the home of yellow-headed blackbirds, marsh wrens and various shore birds.

There are not many small areas of land, perhaps, that comprise such an unusual variety of nesting sites and feeding places, and it is not surprising that after the Chicago meeting, we should feel stirring within us a sense of obligation